



Community Grants Program 2026 Funding Opportunity *West Hawai'i Fund (Hawai'i Island)*

Online Application Deadline:
Monday, August 17, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST

OVERVIEW

The Community Grants Program provides project- or program-based funding to nonprofit organizations benefitting the communities and people of Hawai'i. Specific community funds established at the Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) support the Community Grants Program. Advisory committees will review proposals and make grant recommendations to support projects or programs that are most consistent with the purpose and priorities of each fund.

WEST HAWAI'I FUND

The West Hawai'i Fund was established for the benefit of the people and communities of West Hawai'i, from North Kohala to Ocean View Estates. The West Hawai'i Fund aims to support programs that address equitable and inclusive access to services, build resilience and connection between different sectors of the community and strengthen the long-term capacity of individuals and organizations to become healthy, vibrant, and sustainable. Preference will be given to organizations based in West Hawai'i.

NEW: MULTI-YEAR FUNDING

Beginning with the 2026 application cycle, the Community Grants program for West Hawai'i has transitioned to a two-year grant structure.

Eligible organizations may apply for funding to support programs over a two-year period (2026–2027 and 2027–2028). While grant funds will continue to be released annually, organizations awarded funding will not be required to reapply in the second year, provided grant requirements are met.

This approach is intended to provide greater funding stability for nonprofit partners, support longer-term planning, and reduce administrative burden while strengthening sustained community impact in West Hawai'i.

Focus: Grant support for programs that benefit the people and communities of West Hawai'i, from North Kohala to Ocean View Estates.

Grant Period: November 2026 to November 2028

Grant Range: \$1,500 to \$10,000 per year

Estimated Total Funds Available: \$300,000 over two years



TIMELINE/KEY DATES

Description	Date
Application Release	July 6, 2026
Virtual Information Session*	July 27, 2026 @ 1pm
Application Deadline	August 17, 2026
Anticipated Notification Time Frame	November 17, 2026

*To register for the virtual information session, please [click this link](#).

ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS

This funding opportunity is for nonprofit organizations, fiscally-sponsored organizations, community serving groups with a charitable purpose, a program of a church, or a project of a Hawai'i DOE school.

- Applicants must be responsive to the priorities identified by the West Hawai'i Fund, as specified above.
- Organizations currently funded by HCF with overdue final reports are not eligible to apply.
- Letters of partnership are required for all first-time applicants to this program, including new organizations and organizations proposing new programs in the community. Letters must be current and from organizations or community members in West Hawai'i supporting this project.

FUNDING RANGE

Grants from this funding opportunity range from \$1,500 to \$10,000 per year and are awarded for two years, unless otherwise noted in the award letter. For requests of more than \$5,000 per year, preference will be given to 501(c)(3) organizations, or groups with a 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor. The total funding pool is \$300,000 over the two-year period.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Online Application

Applications can be submitted online via the Hawai'i Community Foundation's [Grants Portal](#) using Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. Applicants must log in to their account to apply; new users must register for an account. We recommend that you do not wait until the last moment to submit your application as you may experience technical difficulties. Only complete applications submitted by the deadline will be accepted; this includes completion of Organization Profiles and associated fiscal sponsorship documents, if applicable.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Both new and returning users must certify and submit the organization profile prior to submission of the application; re-certification is required every six months.



The Organizational Profile consists of five tabs: *Organization Information, Contact Information, Budget, Board and Certification*. To submit your organization profile, you must complete all required fields marked with an asterisk on each tab.

The following additional documents will be required:

- EX: IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter (not required if previously applied to the Foundation or if applying through a fiscal sponsor)

APPLICATION

The application consists of four tabs: *Program Overview, Program Information, Budget, and Supporting Documents & Certification*. All required fields are marked with an asterisk.

- **Program Overview:**
 - Provide general information and characteristics about the program including program title, duration, program location(s), ages and genders served, and the CHANGE sector(s) your program most closely aligns with.
 - For more information about the CHANGE framework, please visit our website <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/change>.
 - If you have a fiscal sponsor, you will be asked to identify your fiscal sponsor. Please note, your fiscal sponsor must first be registered in the Grants Portal prior to submitting your application.
- **Program Information:**
 - **Organization Description:** Describe the history and mission of the organization/program. What is the organization's experience implementing this program and staff capabilities to conduct the proposed work? *(Maximum 2,500 characters = ¾ page)*
 - **Problem or Opportunity:** Describe the need or opportunity you are trying to address and why this is critical. *(Maximum 3,000 characters = ¾ page)*
 - **Program Activities:** Describe the activities that will be completed to address the need/opportunity. Explain why you chose this approach. Provide a program timeline. Describe how your project aligns with the priority of the fund you are applying. *(Maximum 3,500 characters = 1 page)*
 - **Expected Results:** Describe what you hope to achieve and how you will measure the effectiveness of your program. *(Maximum 3,500 characters = 1 page)*
- **Budget:** Provide your total program budget, the amount requested (for two years) through this application and upload a copy of your program's budget (for two years), showing income and expenses, indicating sources of income that are pending and secured.
 - Applicants are recommended to use the **West Hawaii Community Grants Program Budget** template available in the Grant Portal's Resources section.



- **Supporting Documents & Certification:** Letters of partnership are required for all first-time applicants to this program, including new organizations and organizations proposing new programs in the community. Letters must be current and from organizations or community members in West Hawai'i supporting this project.
- If you are using a fiscal sponsor, please be sure that they certify your application prior to submission.

FISCAL SPONSORS

- Fiscal sponsors must have an account in the portal. Their profile must be certified and include their IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter and up-to-date financial documents. Fiscal Sponsor Agreement and Board Resolution templates can be found at this [link](#).
- Starting July 28, 2025, **fiscal sponsors will be required to certify the application before it can be submitted by the applicant.** To do so, the applicant must invite the fiscal sponsor to collaborate on the draft application. Please reference this [video](#) and our [External User Guide](#) on how to invite collaborators. The fiscal sponsor as a collaborator can then check the Fiscal Sponsor certification box under Supporting Documents & Certification.

NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Decision notifications will be sent by email to the applicant, applicant's Chief Staff or Volunteer, and if applicable, the Fiscal Sponsor contact in the HCF Grants Portal. The decision letter will be attached to the email and available in the Grants Portal under My Application Tracker in the Active or Historical tabs.

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions about this funding opportunity, please contact Michelle Pope at mpope@hcf-hawaii.org or phone at 808-792-3101.

For technical assistance with the Grants Portal, please submit a [support ticket](#).

Tips for Applicants

- How-to videos, the Applicant User Guide and support tickets can be found on our [website](#).
- Tool tips can be found throughout the portal. These boxes indicate exactly what information you should provide.
- Use Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox on a computer for the best user experience.
- The online application has fillable boxes with character limits that may not match character counts in MS word. If you cut and paste your work into the application, please be sure all text is complete.
- If you have an existing organization profile and fields are not editable, please click "Update Profile". This will move your org profile to draft and allow you to make edits. Click "Submit" to move it back to active status.